



# THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON



204  
P

12881





# THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON





## THE CHILDREN'S BOOKSHELF

*Popular stories delightfully illustrated and so adapted as to make an irresistible appeal to all young children. Crown 8vo, Limp Cloth, or with Picture Cover. Also in Cloth Boards.*

- THE CHILDREN'S HIAWATHA  
THE CHILDREN'S BRER RABBIT  
THE CHILDREN'S ROBIN HOOD  
THE CHILDREN'S GULLIVER  
A SHORT ROBINSON CRUSOE  
THE CHILDREN'S KING ARTHUR  
THE CHILDREN'S SINDBAD  
THE CHILDREN'S ALICE  
THE CHILDREN'S WATER BABIES  
THE CHILDREN'S BLACK BEAUTY  
THE CHILDREN'S HEReward  
THE CHILDREN'S GREEK STORIES  
THE CHILDREN'S JACKANAPES  
THE CHILDREN'S UNCLE TOM'S CABIN  
THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY  
ROBINSON  
THE CHILDREN'S NORSE TALES  
THE CHILDREN'S DON QUIXOTE  
THE CHILDREN'S ALI BABA  
THE CHILDREN'S ALADDIN  
THE CHILDREN'S BOOK OF FAVOURITE  
TALES  
THE CHILDREN'S JOAN OF ARC  
THE CHILDREN'S TALES FROM  
DICKENS  
THE CHILDREN'S BOOK OF SAINTS  
THE CHILDREN'S BOOK OF HEROES  
THE CHILDREN'S BOOK OF HEROINES  
THE CHILDREN'S KING OF THE  
GOLDEN RIVER  
THE CHILDREN'S BOOK OF DOGS  
THE CHILDREN'S BOOK OF ANIMAL  
TALES  
THE CHILDREN'S FIRST ENGLISH  
FAIRY BOOK  
THE CHILDREN'S SECOND ENGLISH  
FAIRY BOOK  
THE CHILDREN'S UNCLE REMUS  
THE CHILDREN'S STORY OF ROLAND  
THE CHILDREN'S BOOK OF IRISH  
LEGENDS  
THE CHILDREN'S TALES OF OTHER  
LANDS





*Fr.*

FRITZ WANTED TO SHOOT THE MONKEY



5

# THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

ADAPTED BY  
F. H. LEE

FROM  
J. D. WYSS

ILLUSTRATED BY  
HONOR C. APPLETON



FRITZ THREW THE NOOSE CLEVERLY OVER ITS HEAD

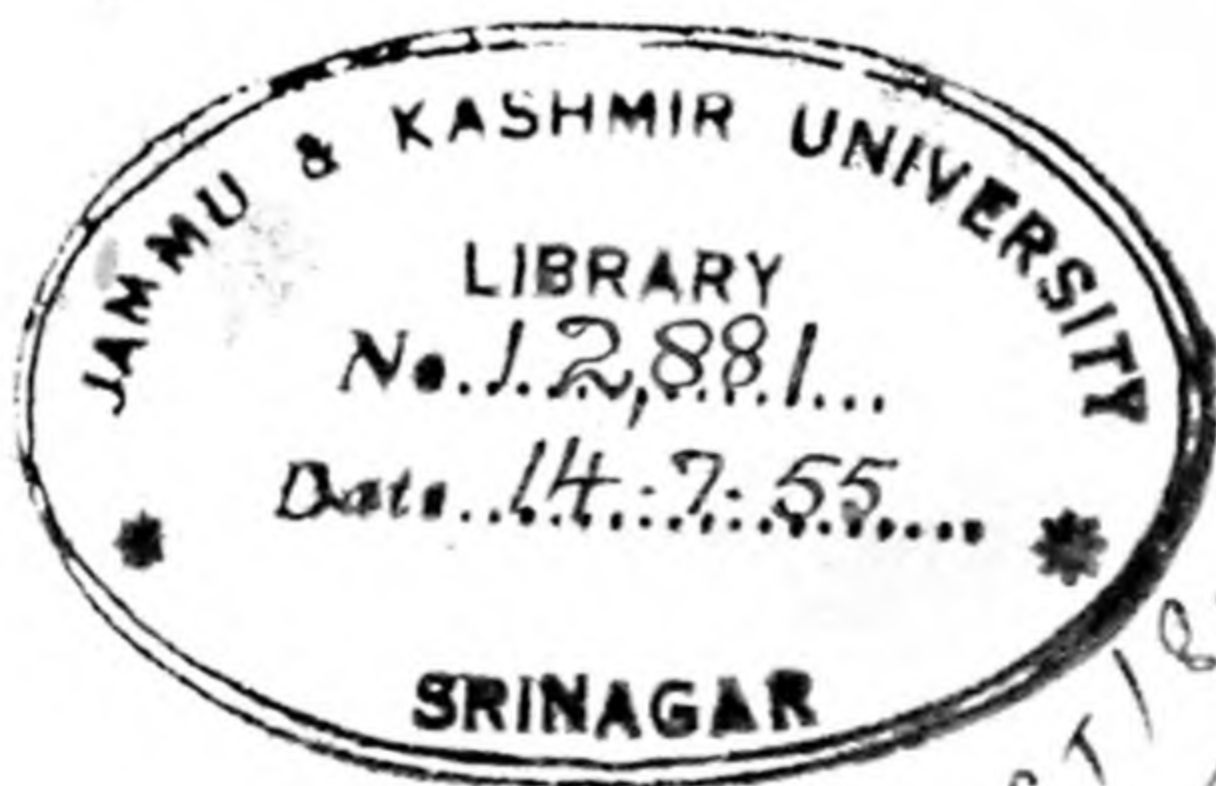
LONDON  
GEORGE G. HARRAP & CO. LTD.  
SYDNEY TORONTO BOMBAY STOCKHOLM



*First published February 1938  
by GEORGE G. HARRAP & CO. LTD.  
182 High Holborn, London, W.C.1.*

*Reprinted: June 1939; October 1940;  
March 1941; November 1941; September 1943;  
March 1947*

*Copyright. All rights reserved*





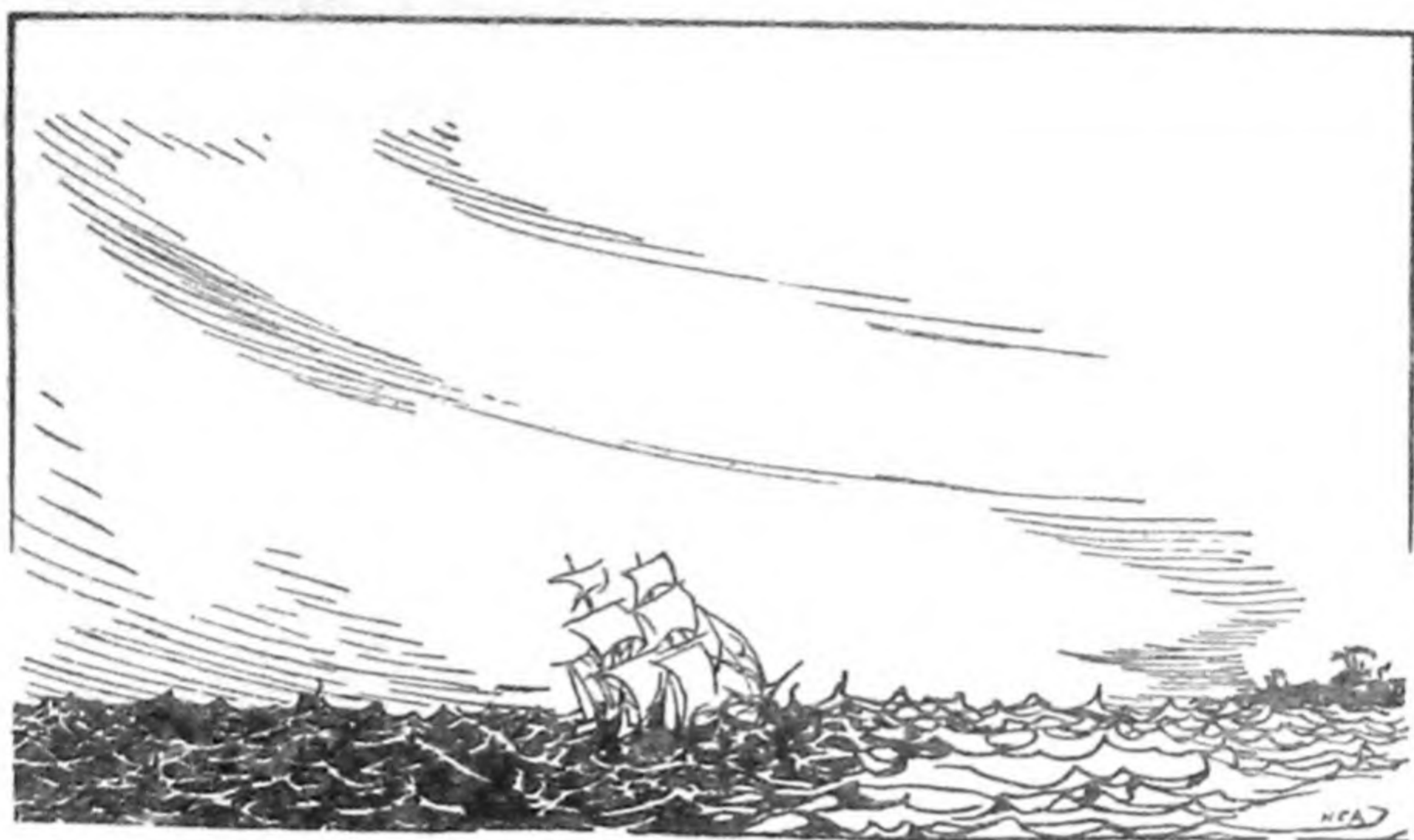
TIED BY THE LEG TO A GOOSE

## CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE SHIPWRECK . . . . .	7
II. THE LANDING . . . . .	9
III. EXPLORING THE ISLAND . . . . .	14
IV. A NEW PLAYMATE AND SOME ENEMIES . . . . .	17
V. RETURN TO THE WRECK . . . . .	20
VI. FLOATING THE HERD . . . . .	22
VII. CHANGING HOUSES . . . . .	24
VIII. MAKING A LADDER . . . . .	26
IX. OUR HOUSE IN THE TREE . . . . .	28
X. NAMING THE ISLAND . . . . .	29
XI. OTHER VISITS TO THE WRECK . . . . .	32
XII. OUR NEW BOAT . . . . .	34
XIII. A HUNTING-EXPEDITION . . . . .	36
XIV. MORE EXPLORING . . . . .	41
XV. BUSY DAYS . . . . .	43
XVI. NEW DISCOVERIES . . . . .	44
	5

# THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

CHAPTER	PAGE
XVII. THE STAIRCASE . . . . .	47
XVIII. THE WILD ASS . . . . .	49
XIX. WINTER RAINS . . . . .	52
XX. THE GROTTO . . . . .	54
XXI. OUR CAVE-DWELLING . . . . .	57
XXII. THE ANIMAL FARM . . . . .	59
XXIII. THE WHALE . . . . .	60
XXIV. A TERRIBLE ENEMY . . . . .	62



# THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

## CHAPTER I

### THE SHIPWRECK

THE adventures of a Swiss missionary and his family, who were on their way to an island in the South Seas when a fierce storm arose.

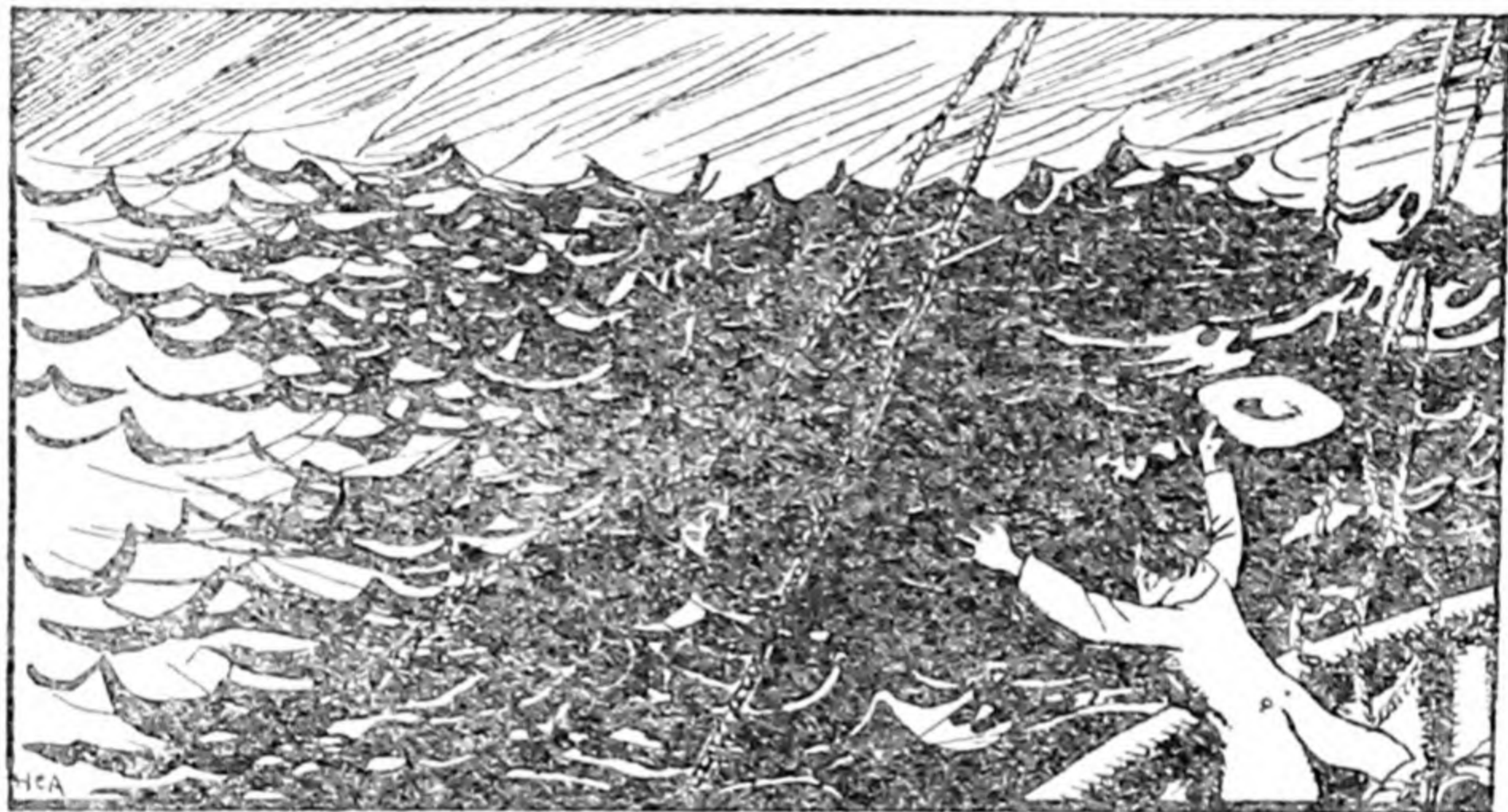
SIX days the storm had lasted. No one on board knew where we were; the masts were broken, the ship was leaking, and every moment we expected to be drowned. I was with my family in the cabin when suddenly some one shouted, "Land, land!" But at the same instant there was a terrible crash; we had run upon the rocks. I heard the captain call, "Launch the boats," but the warning was too



## THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

late for us, for by the time I had struggled on deck, the last boat was being pushed off from the ship. I knew that we were alone on the ship with little chance of escape.

However, I noticed land in the distance, so I returned to my family and said as bravely as I



THERE WAS A TERRIBLE CRASH

could, "Take courage, this cabin is beyond the reach of the waves at present, and if the wind settles, perhaps to-morrow we may reach land."

My wife therefore prepared supper, and the three youngest children, Ernest aged 12, Jack aged 10, and Francis aged 8, were soon fast asleep. We could not rest, because we were expecting the ship every minute to be dashed to pieces, so with Fritz, who was 15 years old, we talked of how we could reach land.

At daybreak I made my way to the hold to see how much food there was, while my wife

## THE LANDING

went to feed the animals (a cow, an ass, two goats, six sheep, a ram, and a sow).

Fritz found two guns and gunpowder, while Ernest made sure of some carpenter's tools.

Francis chose a box of fishing-hooks, and Jack decided to get something from the Captain's cabin. But the instant he opened the door two huge dogs sprang out.

"They will help us to hunt," he said, "when we get ashore."

"But how are we to get there?" I asked.

"Let us each float ashore in a big tub," he answered.

"A splendid plan," I replied, for I had seen some casks floating in the hold. We soon had these on the lower deck, and began sawing them through the middle.

At last we had eight tubs ready. I nailed them firmly to a long plank and put another plank along each side. Having launched our boat we made outriggers to keep it steady.

As it was too late to venture ashore before nightfall, we ate a hearty meal and went to bed.

## CHAPTER II

## THE LANDING

**E**ARLY next morning we were all astir. We gave the animals enough food for several days, and then collected our stores. We had a case of soup-cakes, another of ship's biscuits, some fishing-tackle, nails, carpenter's tools, sail-canvas for a tent, and, at the last moment, we



## THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

decided to take the geese, ducks, fowls, and pigeons.

Very carefully we got into our tubs, my wife in the first, then Francis, then Fritz. The gunpowder, fowls, sail-cloth, and food were in



I STEERED OUR STRANGE BOAT SAFELY TO LAND

the next two tubs, while Jack, Ernest, and myself were in the last three.

With oars ready we pushed off from the wreck. The two dogs, Turk and Bill, no sooner saw us go than they leaped into the water and swam after us, managing to keep up with the boat by occasionally resting their paws on our outriggers.

As we drew near the shore we saw casks, chests, and broken portions of the wreck strewn

## THE LANDING

about. The ducks and geese had already made their way to a little bay, and with some difficulty I steered our strange boat safely to land.

Our first thought was to thank God for His care; then we looked round for a convenient



I MADE A CHEERFUL FIRE

place to set up our tent. Having found one, we soon had a rough kind of shelter ready. The boys gathered moss and dry grass for the beds, while I made a fire-place with stones, near a spring from which we could get plenty of fresh water.

With dry twigs and branches of trees I made a cheerful fire, on which was placed the pot,



## THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

filled with water, into which I had put several soup-cakes.

Suddenly I heard Jack crying out in fright, and, seizing a hatchet, I ran to his help. He was up to his knees in a shallow pool, and a large lobster had seized him by the leg. It made off at my approach, but, striking it with the hatchet, I was able to bring it to land to serve for our dinner the next day.

Meanwhile Ernest had discovered oysters on a rock near by, and Jack ran off to bring some back. Fritz appeared, having shot an agouti, an animal which burrows in the ground like a rabbit and lives on nuts and fruit. My wife afterwards cooked this, but its flesh was not very pleasant, so we gave it to the two dogs.

Our soup was now ready, but how could we eat it without plates or spoons?

"Use oyster shells," said Ernest, trying in vain to open an oyster with his knife.

"A happy thought," I answered, and taking an oyster I placed it on the hot fire, where it opened almost immediately of itself.

So we each did the same, and having swallowed the fish inside (though we did not like the taste very much) we used the shell as a spoon, dipping it into the soup, and scalding our fingers often as we did so.

The fowls gathered round us to pick up the crumbs of biscuits, and my wife gave them a few handfuls of corn she had brought from the ship; then they went to roost on top of our tent. The pigeons flew to holes in the

## THE LANDING

rocks, and the ducks and geese found shelter under some bushes.

Darkness came on very suddenly, and having loaded our guns, and prayed to God to take



FRITZ APPEARED, HAVING SHOT AN AGOUTI

care of us, we closed our tent and lay down. The day had been hot, but the night was bitterly cold, and we were glad to creep together for warmth. Nothing happened during the night to alarm us, and we all slept peacefully.



# THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

## CHAPTER III

### EXPLORING THE ISLAND

**N**EXT morning we agreed that after breakfast Fritz and I must search the country round for any traces of our shipmates. So



FRITZ AND I SEARCHED THE COUNTRY ROUND FOR OUR SHIPMATES

we packed up what was left of the lobster, and taking also some biscuits, a flask of water, our guns, hatchets, and game-bags, we set out wondering what dangers we might meet.

## EXPLORING THE ISLAND

Turk came with us while Bill stayed behind with the rest.

Soon we reached a river, but the banks were very steep, and we had to go some distance before we could cross it. We passed on through tall grass to a wood which stretched right down to the sea. Beautiful birds flew about us, and Fritz saw monkeys among the branches. Some strange trees attracted our attention; the fruits, which grow on the trunks, were very like pumpkins in shape, but had harder skins.

"These are gourd trees," I cried, "and though the fruit is not much used for food, we can make excellent dishes, basins, plates, and flasks from the gourds."

Then I showed Fritz how to tie a cord very tightly round the gourds so as to cut them into bowls and other shapes. We made several of these dishes and left them in the sun to dry while we went on our way, reaching at last some high land, from which we had a splendid view of both sea and land. Nowhere, however, did we find any trace of our shipmates.

We next came to a grassy jungle. Fearing we might meet with some deadly serpent here, we made Turk go on before us to give warning, and we each cut one of the long canes growing there, to defend ourselves if attacked.

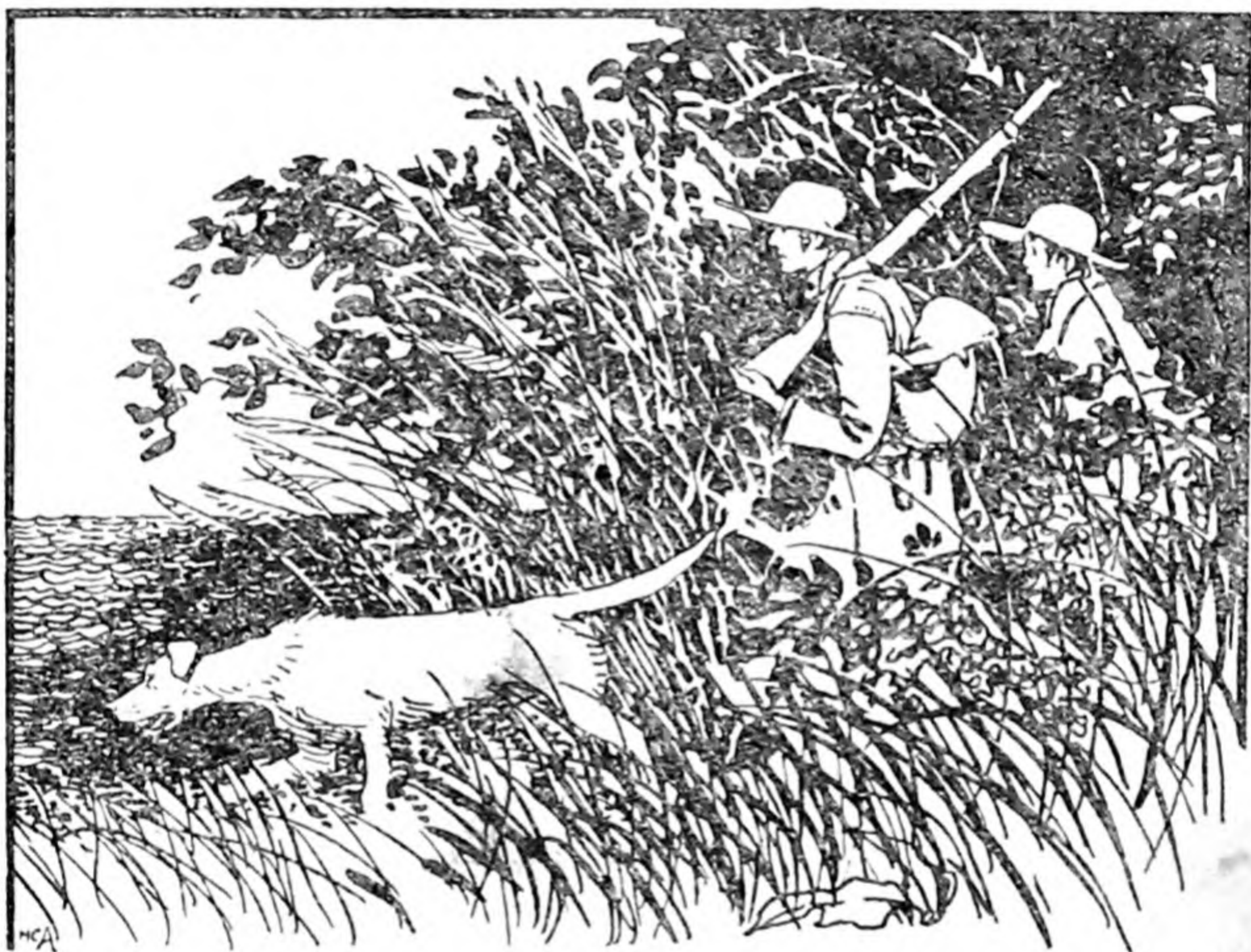
Soon I noticed a kind of juice oozing from the cut end of my stick. I tasted it and was delighted to find we were in a plantation of sugar-canes. Fritz too was happy in this



## THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

discovery, and we each sucked the sweet juice and felt very refreshed.

As we entered a wood of coco-palm trees, a number of monkeys, alarmed at the barking



WE MADE TURK GO ON BEFORE US TO GIVE WARNING

of Turk, fled quickly to the top of the trees. There they stayed grinning and chattering angrily at us. Fritz wanted to shoot, but I said, "No, these monkeys are of great use if only we can make them throw down the coco-nuts to us."

I therefore began throwing some stones up towards the monkeys, who at once seized coco-nuts from the trees and hurled them

## A NEW PLAYMATE AND SOME ENEMIES

down in such numbers that we could hardly escape being hurt.

When the shower of nuts had ceased we gathered several, and opening the little holes with a knife, we sucked out the milk. Then breaking the shell with our hatchets, we ate as much as we wanted of the nut itself.

Turk had the rest of the lobster, which we no longer needed and which was rather tough, while I gathered such of the coco-nuts as had long stalks, and throwing them over my shoulder, we set out for home, Fritz carrying a bundle of sugar-canes.

### CHAPTER IV

## A NEW PLAYMATE AND SOME ENEMIES

**W**HEN we reached the place where we had left our gourd-dishes, we found them quite dry, and hard as bone, so putting them in our bags we hurried on.

In one part of the wood we came upon a troop of monkeys. Turk dashed in among them, and they scattered. One mother, however, was killed, and her young one was left helpless and frightened.

The poor little creature sprang nimbly on to Fritz's back, and fastened its paws in his hair, screaming in terror. It took me a long while to coax it away, and when it was calmer I held it in my arms like a baby.



## THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

Fritz begged me to let him take it home, and I agreed; so we started off again, the little creature sitting on Fritz's shoulder, while I carried the sugar-canes. After a while Fritz tied the monkey with a cord to Turk's back. Turk objected to this very strongly at first, but later on he grew more friendly and we soon reached the river-bank.



MADE TURK CARRY IT ON HIS BACK

Bill heard us coming, and barked a welcome, while Turk answered so loudly that the little monkey leaped in terror on to Fritz's shoulder again and would not come down for a long time.

Every one shouted with joy to see us and we showed them the sugar-cane, and coconuts, and plates and dishes. They were overjoyed with the monkey and laughed heartily when we made Turk carry it on his back.

My wife had set up two forked sticks by the fire and placed a long, thin wand between them. On this all sorts of fish were cooking,



## A NEW PLAYMATE AND SOME ENEMIES

while Ernest had shot a penguin, and this also was being roasted ready for our supper.

And a wonderful supper it was, for a desert island—soup, fish, penguin, Dutch cheese (rescued from the ship), and coco-nut for dessert. We sat on the ground and ate from



FRITZ PROPPED ITS BODY NEAR THE TENT-DOOR

our gourd-rind plates and dishes, while by sawing some of the coco-nuts in half we made neat basins for our soup.

We had not slept long that night when we were awakened by a great commotion among the dogs and fowls. My wife, Fritz, and I each seized a gun and rushed out. By the light of the moon we saw that a terrible battle was going on.

Bill and Turk were surrounded by about a dozen jackals. Our brave dogs managed to kill four of them, and we shot several more and put the rest to flight.

Fritz was proud of having killed a jackal

## THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

and propped its body near the tent-door so that he could surprise his brothers in the morning.

Then we all turned in again and slept soundly till daylight.

### CHAPTER V

#### RETURN TO THE WRECK

**N**EXT morning the dogs no sooner saw the jackal's body at the entrance to the tent than they flew at it, thinking it was alive, while the little monkey fled in fright to the tent and hid himself among the moss till only the tip of his nose could be seen.

For breakfast there was nothing but ship's biscuits, which were so hard we could scarcely bite them at all. Luckily, however, Ernest discovered that one barrel, which had floated ashore, was filled with butter. So we toasted our biscuits, buttered them hot, and this proved splendid fare.

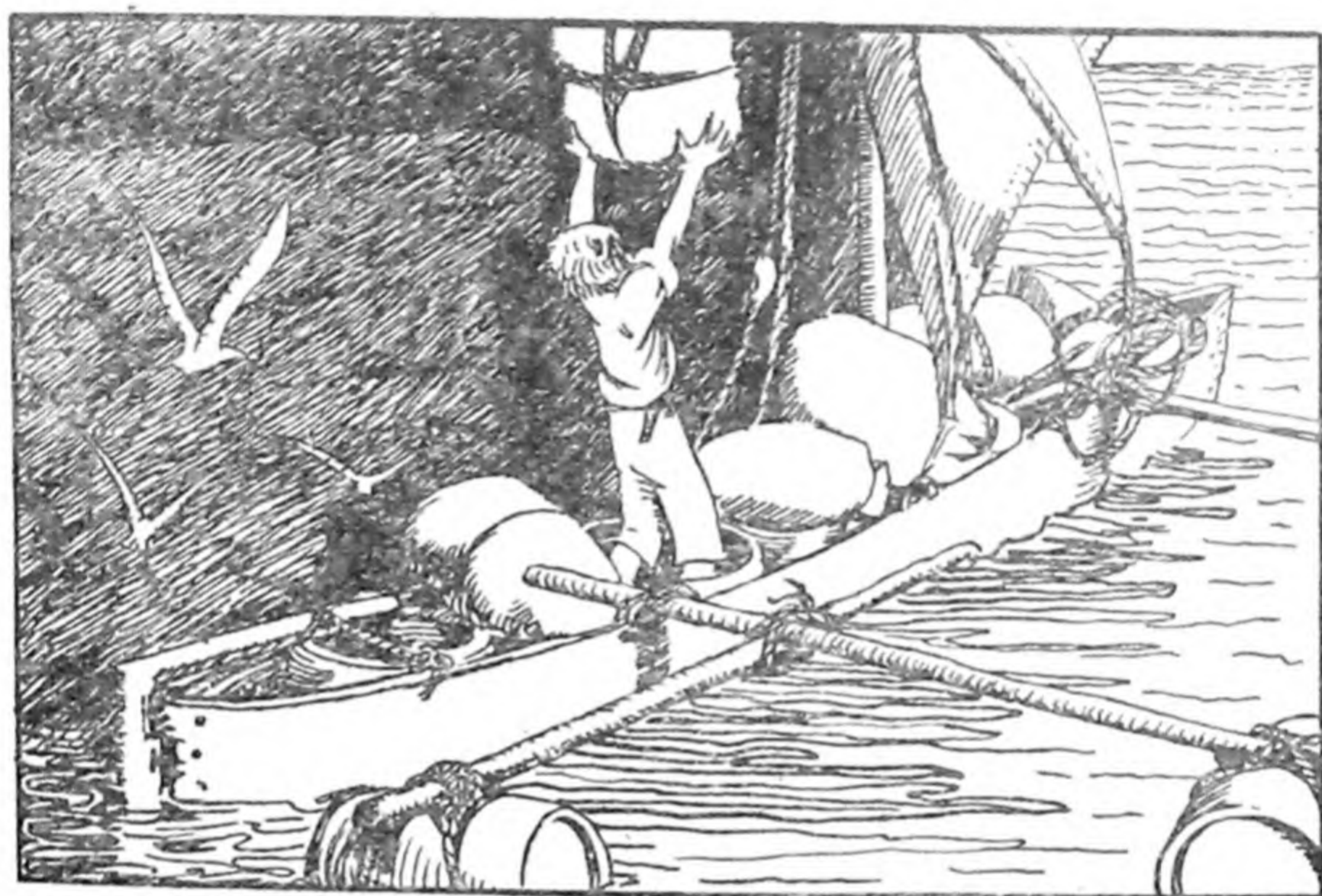
Fritz and I then started off in our tub-boat for the wreck to feed the animals and bring back as many useful things as possible. Since we might have to stay on board all night I fixed a signal-post near the tent with a piece of sail-cloth for a flag, and my wife agreed to lower the flag and fire three gun-shots if she needed us to return sooner.

We took the little monkey with us, so that it could have some milk from the cow or goat. The animals seemed delighted to see us, and



## RETURN TO THE WRECK

to have fresh food. We too had a good meal, then set to work to prepare a sail for our boat. After fixing a mast into the fourth tub, we hoisted the sails and nailed a red flag to the top of the mast.



WE SPENT THE REST OF THE DAY LOADING IT

Afterwards we made a rudder, and having named our boat *Deliverance*, we spent the rest of the day loading it with gunpowder, nails, tools, canvas and clothing, knives, forks, and spoons. From the Captain's cabin we took some silver dishes and a hamper of good wine; afterwards we filled the tubs with soup, hams, sausages, bags of maize, potatoes, hammocks, blankets, hunting-knives, cord, and string.

When night came we each got into one of the tubs, which, though not very comfortable,



## THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

seemed safer than the wreck. Fritz slept soundly, but I was too troubled to rest, wondering all the time if those on the island were in danger from jackals or any other enemy.

### CHAPTER VI

### FLOATING THE HERD

AS soon as day broke we went on deck, and looking through the ship's telescope we saw the signal on shore, and I knew that my family were still safe.

After breakfast we made plans for getting the cattle safely to land. We put an empty cask as a float on each side of the cow and the ass, and fastened these by girdles of sail-cloth round each animal's body. For the smaller animals we used large pieces of cork as floats. The sow proved the most troublesome, and kicked and squealed, but in two hours all was ready.

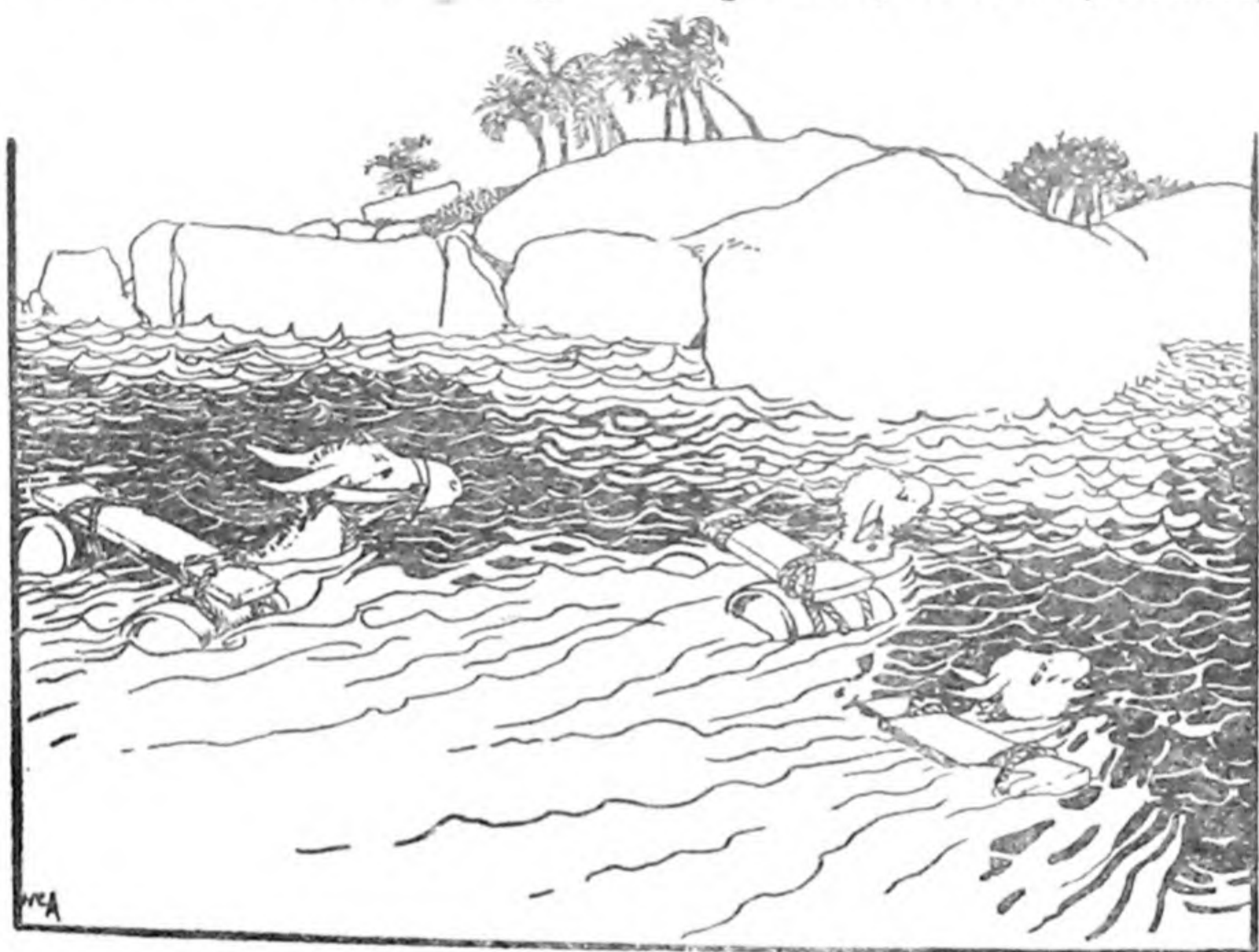
We tied a cord to the horns or neck of each animal and, making the hole in the side of the ship still bigger, the cattle were floated out into the open sea. The sow struggled furiously and broke loose, but fortunately she swam off and reached the shore before us.

Fastening all the cords to the stern of our boat we sailed off, drawing the cattle after us, and as soon as we reached shallow water they walked ashore.

Every one was delighted to see us. We

## FLOATING THE HERD

unloaded our cargo and made the ass help us to carry it to our tent. My wife prepared a tempting supper of turtles' eggs (which Bill had discovered in the sand) and toasted cheese and wine, and, using the spoons, knives, forks,



FLOATED THEM OUT INTO THE OPEN SEA

plates, and silver we had brought from the wreck, we felt quite grand.

The dogs, cattle, and fowls came near for a share of the good things, and after supper my wife told me of her adventures.

"The morning you left," she said, "the boys and I set out across the river in search of a more comfortable and shady spot for our tent. We made towards a distant wood and had to struggle through tall grass and reeds.



## THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

"The wood, however, proved to be a group of about a dozen very large trees. The roots of these formed a number of arches, while one of the trunks was about thirty feet round.

"The branches were thick and the leaves made a splendid shade, while the ground below was carpeted with a short tender plant.

"If only we could build a house among the branches there," said my wife, "it would make a most pleasant and safe home for us."

### CHAPTER VII

### CHANGING HOUSES

THE next morning we were delighted to have fresh milk from the cow to drink with our biscuits, and after a long talk, we decided to build a new home under the huge trees my wife had seen the day before.

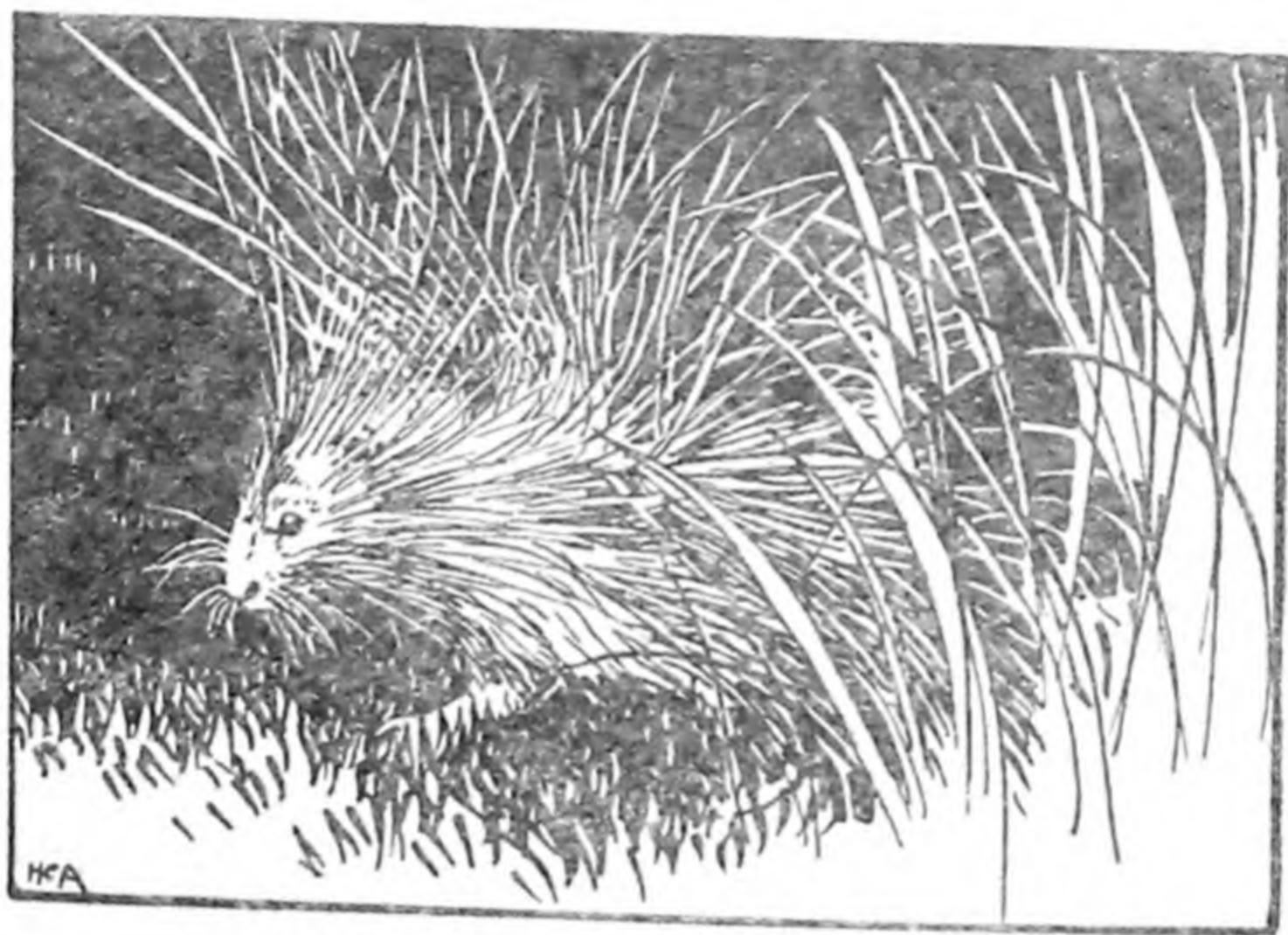
First, however, we knew that we must make a bridge across the river, so that we could travel to and fro in safety. Every one set to work. Fritz and Ernest discovered a number of planks washed ashore from the wreck. These were too heavy for us to lift, but I tied them by cords to the horns of the cow and round the neck of the donkey and in this way the animals were able to drag the planks to the river-bank. By passing strong ropes over the branches of the trees the longest planks were swung across the river, till they rested on either bank. Then we put



## CHANGING HOUSES

short planks across these, and our bridge was finished.

The following morning we gathered our stores together, packed all we could into bags, and fixed these across the backs of the animals. The fowls were coaxed into the tent with some



WE CAME ACROSS A HUGE PORCUPINE

handfuls of corn, and then we put them safely into two hampers.

The stores that we could not carry were packed into the tent, and casks and chests piled round as a protection.

We formed a strange procession. My wife and Fritz led the way. Then came the laden cow and ass. Jack, with the monkey on his shoulder, drove the goats. Ernest managed the sheep, and I came last, while Turk and Bill seemed happy in guarding us all.

We travelled slowly across the bridge, and

## THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

when any animals were tempted to stray, to eat the rich grass, the dogs brought them back to an orderly line.

On the way we came across a huge porcupine, and Turk and Bill had several wounds from its sharp quills till Jack shot it dead. Then by wrapping it in bundles of soft grass we managed to carry it along with us.

### CHAPTER VIII

#### MAKING A LADDER

**A**T last we reached the trees, and I was amazed at their size and agreed that it would be a splendid place for our new home.

We set the animals free and led them to a grazing-ground, tying their forelegs loosely together to prevent them from straying far away. Fritz wandered off exploring and soon returned with a beautiful tiger-cat which he had shot. He lost no time in skinning it and gave its flesh to the dogs.

Jack skinned his porcupine to make dog-collars, and its flesh helped to make soup for our dinner. With some flat stones from the bed of the river we built a little cooking-place and made a fire there with dry twigs.

While dinner was being prepared I bored holes in some of the porcupine quills to make needles for my wife.

Knowing that we could not reach the branches of the tree, which were thirty feet



## MAKING A LADDER

from the ground, till we had made a ladder, we hung our hammocks under the huge, arched roots and, covering them with sail-cloth, we had a shelter, for the time, from the dew and insects.

My wife busied herself making harness for



I WAS AMAZED AT THEIR SIZE

the cow and ass, and we started on the ladder. For the steps we used bamboo rods which we found half buried in the sand. These we cut into two-foot lengths and fastened them a foot apart between two thirty-foot ropes.

Next I made a bow and arrow from slender bamboo rods, and having fastened one end of a ball of thread to the arrow and the other to a thick cord, I shot the arrow over one of the branches. It fell on the other side, carrying the thread with it, and having fastened the



## THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

cord to the ladder, we were able to draw it up the tree and hold it firmly.

Jack, being the lightest, climbed up the steps, then Fritz followed with hammer and nails and fastened the ladder securely to the branch. Afterwards the other end was fixed to some stakes driven into the ground.

Our supper of roast porcupine was now ready, after which we gathered faggots and dry leaves. These we built into a circle of fire about us, and getting into our hammocks, we were soon fast asleep.

### CHAPTER IX

#### OUR HOUSE IN THE TREE

**T**HE next morning my wife milked the cow and goats, and harnessing the cow and ass, set out with the younger boys to bring home a supply of driftwood from the shore.

Fritz and I climbed the ladder and began to saw off all useless branches of the tree. We left some from which to hang our hammocks and then hoisted up planks, which we nailed together across the level branches to make a floor.

Over higher branches we stretched sail-cloth to form a roof. The immense trunk protected the back of our house, while the front was open to the pleasant sea-breezes.

Blankets and other things were then drawn up and the hammocks arranged, after which we

## NAMING THE ISLAND

descended and set about making a table and some benches. These we fixed between the arched roots of the tree and called it our dining-room.

So another day went by. We were glad to see that the poultry seemed inclined to stay with us, while the old sow, who had deserted us for two days, returned of her own accord, grunting joyfully at seeing us again.

After supper the boys lit the fires for the night. Our two dogs were tied to the roots of the tree, and we climbed to our strange tree-dwelling. Having unfastened the ladder at the bottom I drew it up after me and we settled down for our first night in our new home, feeling very secure.

The next day being Sunday, we fed the animals, then we read from a Bible (which had been rescued from the ship), sang some hymns, and spent the day resting quietly.

## CHAPTER X

### NAMING THE ISLAND

**E**RNEST was very anxious to use the bow and arrow I had made, and he proved himself quite skilful too, bringing down many small birds. Of course the other boys were not satisfied till I had made bows and arrows for each one. They too made good use of them, and we had a dish of wild pigeons for our dinner. This pleased me, for we could now keep our guns and gunpowder for other things.



## THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

We decided then it would be wise to give names to the parts of the island we had seen. The bay where we landed we called Safety Bay.



PROVED HIMSELF QUITE SKILFUL TOO, BRINGING  
DOWN MANY SMALL BIRDS

Our first dwelling we named Tent House. Other parts were called Flamingo Marsh (here we had shot down the first flamingo), Cape Disappointment (from which we had looked in vain for our shipmates), Porcupine Plain,

30

## NAMING THE ISLAND

Jackal River, Family Bridge, while our home in the giant fig-tree we called Falcon's Nest.

That evening we set out for the Tent House to fetch supplies of gunpowder and other things and to bring the ducks and geese to a stream near our new home. Knips (the monkey) rode on Bill's back.

As we went by the shady river-bank the boys were busy exploring, when suddenly Ernest called out, "We've found potatoes." I could hardly believe this, but on hurrying to the spot, found it was indeed true, and in a short time we had filled a good-sized bag. As we journeyed on we also found prickly cactus plants, Indian figs, sweet-smelling vanilla, and above all delicious pineapples, on which we feasted with joy.

We discovered many other plants that would prove useful to us, some for medicine, others because of the fibrous threads in their leaves, while on others we found small red insects from which a beautiful scarlet dye could be made.

At Tent House we packed up all the things we could carry. The potato-bags were laid across the dogs, and we all helped with the ducks and geese. They were rather noisy travellers, but in time we reached Falcon's Nest, and after a supper of potatoes and milk, we climbed into our little tree-house and slept peacefully.



# THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

## CHAPTER XI

### OTHER VISITS TO THE WRECK

NOW I had noticed by the shore many pieces of wood which I thought would make an excellent sledge. This we could harness to the ass, and thus bring all our stores quite easily from the Tent House to Falcon's Nest.



AND A KANGAROO, WHICH ERNEST SHOT ON THE WAY HOME

So the boys and I set to work, and before the day had passed the sledge was finished, and we brought a good load home from the Tent House in the evening, as well as a large salmon, caught by the shore, and a kangaroo, which Ernest shot on the way home.

The next day Fritz and I set off in our tub-boat, and, helped by the current, we soon reached the wreck. We worked all day making

## OTHER VISITS TO THE WRECK

a raft by tying long planks securely to empty casks. On this we could carry much more than in our boat. We slept that night in the Captain's cabin, and early next morning began loading our craft.

We took all we could from the ship—doors, windows, mattresses, a carpenter's chest, bars of iron and lead, a package of young fruit-trees wrapped in moss, grindstones, cart-wheels, tongs and shovels; sacks of maize, peas, oats, and even a small handmill; copper wire, a fishing-net, the ship's compass and harpoons. There was a case of jewellery, snuff-boxes, and money, but we left it behind, having no use for it on the island.

With this great load we made for the shore. On the way we were almost overturned by a huge tortoise, but we managed to harpoon it and bring it to land.

Having unloaded our stores, we placed the tortoise, which weighed about three hundred pounds, on the sledge, and started for Falcon's Nest. There we cooked some of the tortoise and salted the rest. We made a big basin of the shell, putting it near the river so that we could always keep it full of fresh water.

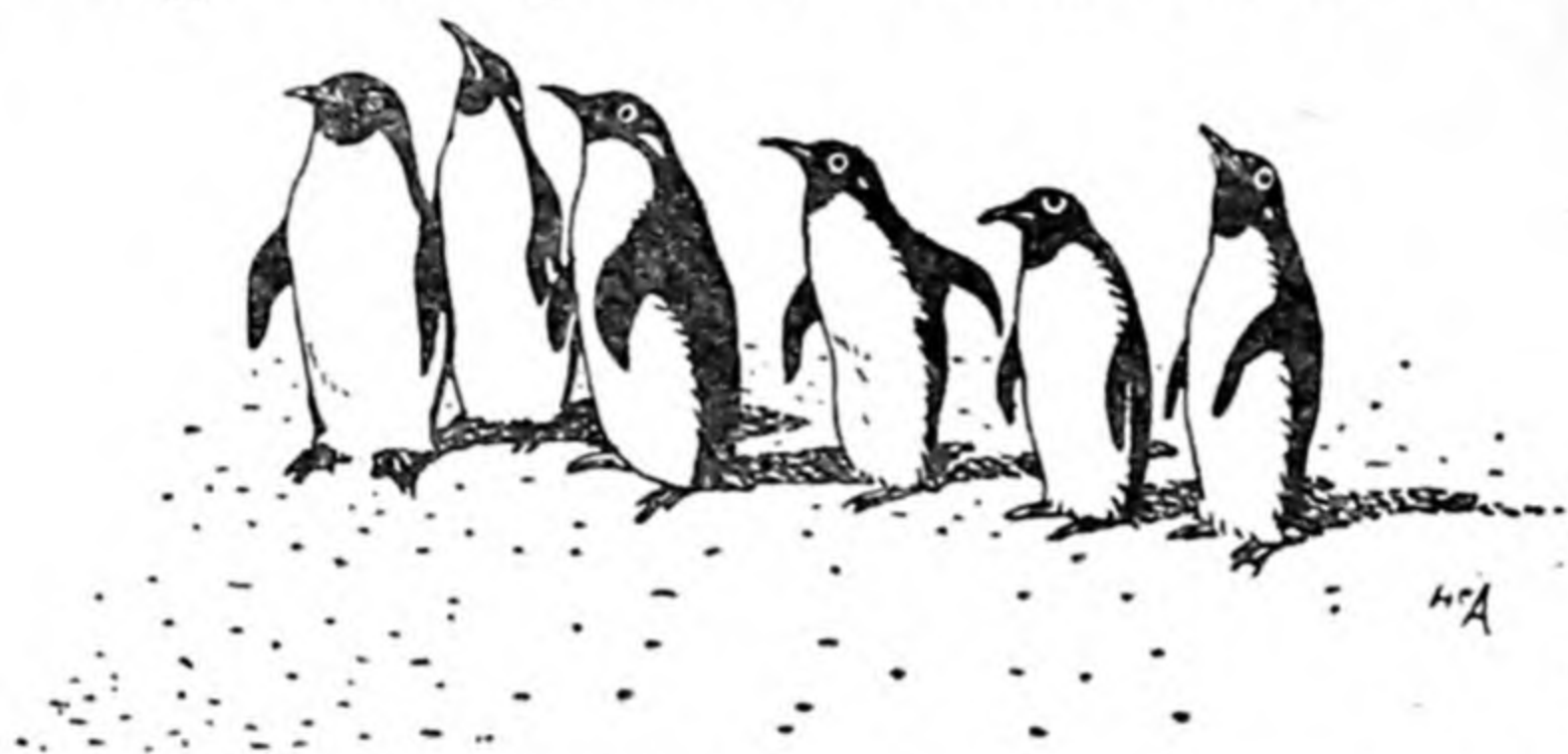
Having hoisted our mattresses to our tree-house we slept that night in greater comfort than before. The next visit to the wreck gave us plates of iron, a barrel of powder, and three wheelbarrows. A row of little penguins on the shore watched us with great curiosity. Jack brought some of these home in his wheel-



## THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

barrow, and we tied each one quite loosely by the leg to a goose, so that they might become tame.

Meantime, Ernest had discovered a plant called manioc or tapioca, from the root of which we could make cassava bread. We first grated the root into fine pieces, packed these into bags and pressed them between very



A ROW OF LITTLE PENGUINS ON THE SHORE WATCHED US

heavy weights to get out all the sap (which was poisonous). Having spread out the crushed roots upon the iron plates over a fire, a dried powder was obtained, and this could be made into biscuits and other tasty food.

So pleased were we with our new discovery that we decided to plant more of this root, and thus have a good supply for the future days.

### CHAPTER XII OUR NEW BOAT

**N**OW between the two decks of the wreck we had found the parts of a small vessel or pinnace all marked ready for putting

## OUR NEW BOAT

together, with complete fittings and even two small guns.

I was very anxious to have this for our own, so for a week we visited the wreck each day and toiled to get the pinnace ready. To launch it, however, was impossible unless we could force a way through the mighty sides of the wreck.

At last, in desperation, I filled a large case with gunpowder and arranged a long thin piece of wood as a match and set fire to the end of it. There was time for us to escape before the flame reached the gunpowder and we listened anxiously for the explosion.

Rowing back afterwards to the wreck, we rejoiced to see that one side of it had been blown away, leaving our pinnace exposed and unharmed. It was now easy to launch it, and after two days spent in putting up the rigging and fitting out our new boat we started for the shore.

Fritz was made captain, Ernest and Jack stood to the guns ready to fire a salute as we came to land, and I acted as pilot.

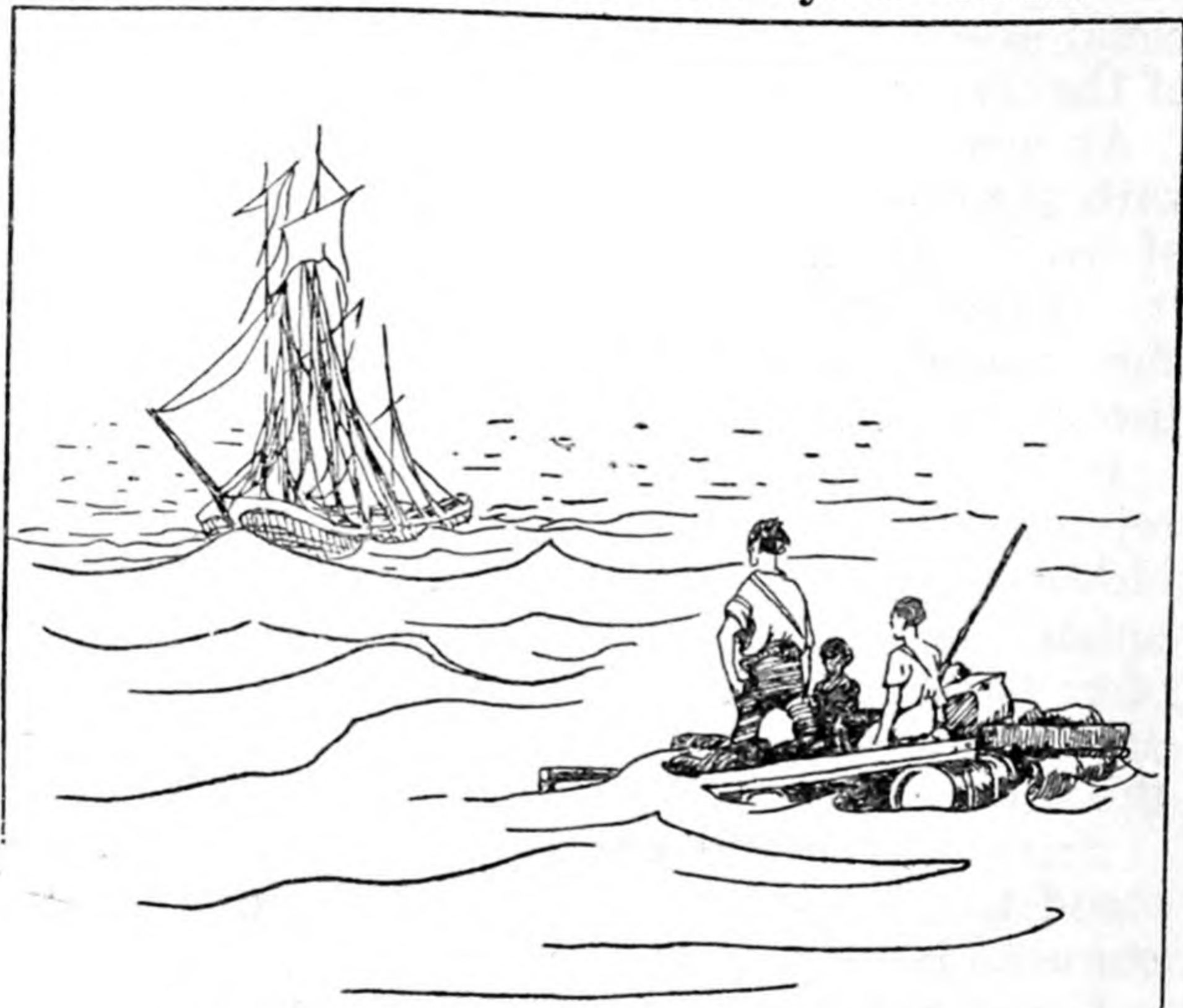
Great was the delight and astonishment of my wife as she came to welcome us. Fritz helped her on board, a salute was fired, and we christened the pinnace the *Elizabeth* after my wife's name.

We fastened our beautiful new boat by the side of our clumsy tub-boat and set off for the Falcon's Nest. On the way my wife showed me a neat garden she had laid out. "See,"



## THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

she cried, "I have planted potatoes, manioc roots, peas, beans, cabbages, and lentils; that part is for sugar-canes, and higher up there are pineapples, maize, and melons. Near by we will plant our orchard. Then we shall have a good store of food the whole year round."



WE LISTENED ANXIOUSLY FOR THE EXPLOSION

### CHAPTER XIII

#### A HUNTING-EXPEDITION

**W**E were becoming quite used to life on the desert island, and, to keep fit and strong, we had contests in running, leaping, wrestling,

## A HUNTING-EXPEDITION

archery, and climbing, while I taught the boys how to throw the lasso. One day, having harnessed the ass to the sledge, we all started on a hunting-expedition, for our stores of meat were very low.

When we arrived at the Wood of Monkeys, Ernest looked up at the coco-nut trees and exclaimed, "I wish one would fall from the tree." Hardly had he spoken when his wish was granted, and a large coco-nut dropped at his feet.

I could see neither bird nor monkey and we were all wondering how the nut could have fallen, when Jack shouted, "Look! there comes the magician"—and a large land-crab came leisurely down the trunk of the tree. Jack struck at it boldly but missed, and when the animal opened its claws Jack fled in terror. He returned, however, and taking off his coat, dropped it on the crab, thus stopping its progress, and I hastened up and killed it with a blow of my hatchet.

Every one was interested in this strange, ugly creature, and I told them that land-crabs were very fond of coco-nuts, but being unable to break the shell, they climb the trees and break off the nuts, which being still unripe, are soft, and then they pierce the holes at the narrow end of the nut and eat the kernel that way.

As we passed on, it grew very hot, and we could only travel slowly and often had to cut away huge, creeping plants from the pathway.



## THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

From the stalk of one creeper we found we could get sap, which looked like pure clear water. Ernest filled a coco-nut cup with it, and we were glad to quench our thirst.

At Gourd Wood we gathered gourds to make bowls and dishes while Ernest went exploring. Suddenly he ran back in terror,



JACK DROPPED HIS COAT ON A CRAB

“A wild boar! A wild boar!” he cried. We called the dogs and with our guns hurried off. The dogs dashed on ahead, and we soon heard loud angry grunts mingling with their barks.

Our alarm, however, was soon turned to merriment, for the terrible “wild boar” was only our own great sow which had escaped into the woods. Turk and Bill had seized her long ears, but I called them off, and the sow went on with her feast of fruit which appeared to have fallen from some of the trees near. I picked up one of the fruits; it was something like an apple. Master Knips seized it at once and ate it with great enjoyment. Then I

## A HUNTING-EXPEDITION

remembered that this must be the guava, from which delicious jelly was made.

The boys and I now pushed off by ourselves towards a high rock. Suddenly Jack startled



THE CREATURE AWOKE, LOOKING ABOUT AS IF PLEASED

us by saying he had seen a crocodile. When I came nearer I saw it was a kind of lizard, called an iguana. It was about five feet long and seemed asleep. Fritz wanted to fire, but I reminded him that its scales would protect it from shot.

I decided, however, to try to charm it with music. I whistled a low and sad tune holding in one hand a stick with a noose at the end, and in the other a thin wand.

The creature awoke, looking about as if



## THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

pleased, moving its tail slowly and turning its head from side to side. I drew nearer, tickling it gently with the wand and whistling all the time. It lifted up its head,



FRITZ AND JACK WALKED BEHIND, HOLDING ITS TAIL TO  
TAKE SOME OF THE WEIGHT

and then opened its terrible jaws. Seizing my chance, I threw the noose round its neck and, jumping on its back, I thrust the wand into its nostril, where it is weakest, and in a short time the iguana was dead.

How to carry it home was a problem, but at last we hoisted it on to my back, while Fritz and Jack walked behind, holding its tail so as to take some of the weight.

## MORE EXPLORING

My wife was delighted to see us, and placing the iguana on the ass we made our way to Falcon's Nest, where we cooked and ate some of the iguana, which made an excellent supper dish.

### CHAPTER XIV

## MORE EXPLORING

ONE day Fritz, Turk, and I set off to go farther into the island. As we entered some woods we heard a noise like a muffled drum, and the sharpening of a saw. I was alarmed and wondered if it could be savages playing their strange, wild music.

Creeping forward cautiously, we gently drew aside some boughs in the thicket, and saw a bird of brilliant plumage perched on the decayed stump of a tree, while other birds watched it with admiration. It strutted about with wings and tail outspread, uttering the strange cry we had heard, and striking its wings against the tree to make the drumming sound.

I knew this to be the beautiful ruffled grouse, and for a time we watched its strange ways with great interest.

We passed on among gigantic trees, through tall grass, across plains of manioc root and potato plants, and in a pretty little grove we noticed some bushes laden with small white berries. This I soon discovered was the fruit of the candleberry myrtle or wax tree.

I was delighted to find it and we gathered a



## THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

supply of berries, for, with the wax we could make candles for the dark evenings.

Later on we saw a number of birds, black in colour, living in nests sheltered by one common roof of clay and rushes, while in the same nests were beautiful small parrots of green and gold



CREEPING FORWARD CAUTIOUSLY, WE GENTLY DREW ASIDE  
SOME BOUGHS IN THE THICKET

plumage. Fritz caught one of these and decided to take it home and teach it to talk.

The whole journey was very interesting. There were wonderful birds and insects, and flowers and trees.

On reaching some very tall trees, forty to sixty feet in height, we discovered small balls of thick gum oozing from cracks in their bark.

"The rubber tree," I cried joyfully. "We are fortunate indeed, for now we can have rubber bottles, shoes, belts, and other useful things.

## BUSY DAYS

We will cut out pieces in the trunk and collect as much as possible of the milky-coloured sap. Then having filled a stocking with sand, we can cover the foot with layers of the gum and let it harden, afterwards emptying out the sand. In this way it will be easy to make rubber shoes and boots."

Another kind of tree was covered with a white dust. I opened the trunk of one of these trees, which had been blown down by the wind, and found inside a white substance called sago. This would be of great use for food.

Last of all we gathered large bundles of sugarcane, and packing our treasures on the sledge we made for home. The younger boys were delighted with the little green parrot, and my wife rejoiced at the thought of making candles, so that we need not be compelled to go to bed as soon as the sun set.

## CHAPTER XV BUSY DAYS

**T**HE next day I began making my candles. I put the berries into a large shallow boiler over the fire. The heat melted the wax, and into this I dipped wicks which my wife had made from threads of sail-cloth.

When one layer of wax had hardened I dipped them again, and then again, and so on, till the wax was thick enough for a candle. That very evening we placed one of these in a



## THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

candlestick made of clay and every one was delighted with the light.

We made butter by putting cream into a gourd, which was then placed in the middle of a square piece of sail-cloth and rocked slowly for a long time.

As our sledge was not suitable for road-tracks we made a two-wheeled cart and this proved very useful. We planted an avenue of nut and fruit trees from Falcon's Nest to Family Bridge, and this afterwards formed a lovely, shady roadway, while Tent House was also protected from enemies and from the heat by trees which we planted round it.

So the weeks passed by. We had plenty of food, but our clothes were almost worn out. Knowing that there were bales of cloth and chests of clothes on the wreck we paid many visits to the ship, and having collected everything that could be of use, clothes, doors, windows, locks, funnels, plants, and boilers, we blew up the old wreck, feeling somewhat sad as we watched it break in pieces. It was as if we had lost an old friend.

### CHAPTER XVI

### NEW DISCOVERIES

ONE day we all set off with the sledge to collect more stores of wild fowls' eggs, potatoes, candleberries, and rubber, and so on.

Passing the coco-nut trees we found our-

## NEW DISCOVERIES

selves near the shore. The whole scene was very beautiful, and we decided to rest beneath the palm trees for the night.

We loosed the animals to feed on the rich grass around, while we were busy gathering



THE ASS MADE OFF THROUGH THE WOODS AT A GALLOP

stores. I showed the boys how to climb the tall trunks of coco-nut trees by a rope passed round the tree and round their bodies. When they had reached the top they cut down many coco-nuts with their hatchets. Knips watched them for a while, then sprang suddenly up a tree near by and threw down nuts as fast as he could, much to our amusement.

As we were putting up our tent for the night, the ass, who had been feeding near, suddenly set up a loud bray, and tossing his head, and



## THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

kicking his heels, made off through the wood at a gallop.

We could not go in pursuit, for darkness was falling, so we built up a large fire and lay down to rest, hoping the donkey would return by the morning.



FOOTPRINTS NOT ONLY OF THE ASS, BUT OF MANY  
OTHER CREATURES

But this did not happen, and I set off at day-break with Jack, in search of the wanderer. After a long while we reached a strip of sandy soil near the river. Here we noticed footprints not only of the ass, but of many other creatures besides. We followed the tracks eagerly, and came to a lovely valley dotted with groves of palm trees. Birds flew about us without any fear, and in the distance we sighted a herd of buffaloes, and hoped the ass would be among

## THE STAIRCASE

them. As we came nearer they gazed at us angrily, then pawed the ground and bellowed fiercely.

Turk and Bill dashed in and seized a young buffalo calf and dragged it to the ground. At the same moment Jack and I fired. The effect was wonderful. The whole herd stood quite still for a moment, then, wheeling round, dashed off through the river till they were out of sight.

The dogs still held the young calf, its mother having been shot. It bellowed continually and kicked, but Jack threw the lasso, and it was soon overcome, and I bound it with a strong rope to lead it home. At first it gave us much trouble, but gradually it grew quieter, and when we reached Falcon's Nest we gave it milk to drink.

## CHAPTER XVII

## THE STAIRCASE

**A**BOUT this time we began to think of making a firm, solid staircase to our home instead of the rope-ladder, which was not easy to climb, especially for my wife.

Now we had noticed that a swarm of bees had built a nest in the trunk of our tree. We wondered if it were hollow, for then we might be able to build stairs inside the huge trunk.

The boys therefore began to tap at the trunk near the roots; to judge from the sound they thought it was hollow, but this knocking unfortunately alarmed the bees, which came



## THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

buzzing out, stinging the boys' faces very badly.

Immediately all was confusion, and it was some hours before the pain ceased or the boys could open their eyes. Meantime, the bees were still buzzing round the tree, so I decided to make a hive from a large gourd and coax the bees into it. I mounted the hive on a stand, and covered it with a slanting straw roof.

By the following morning the boys had quite recovered, and the bees had settled again in the tree-trunk. So we plastered up all holes except that by which the bees entered. Into this I put the bowl of my pipe, and puffed tobacco smoke into the nest to make the bees sleepy.

At first there was a great buzzing, but gradually all became still and I took out my pipe. We then cut out a piece of the bark like a window, and to our joy found such a wonderful stock of honeycomb inside that I feared our gourd-vessels could not hold it all. We took out a great deal, then put the part in which the sleepy bees had settled into the new hive.

Some bees, however, clung in clusters on the branches, and these I was able to draw into a second hive. We drained the honey from the honeycomb and used the wax for making candles.

The tree-trunk proved to be quite hollow, and for some weeks we were very busy with our staircase. We cut a doorway facing the sea, and fitted a door from the ship into it. Having cleaned out the trunk we fixed a long

## THE WILD ASS

centre pole inside, and made deep notches in it, and in the side of the trunk. For the steps, short planks were placed across in the notches right up to our tree-home. A rope handrail was fixed at the side and into openings in the trunk we fitted windows, brought from the wreck.

We were very proud of our work and now felt much safer in our tree-home.

## CHAPTER XVIII

## THE WILD ASS

ONE morning, while finishing our staircase, we were disturbed by strange sounds in the wood near by. Seizing our guns we prepared to attack any enemy. Suddenly Fritz laughed heartily, exclaiming, "Why, it's the donkey coming back to us." And so in truth it was.

Nearer came our old friend Grizzle, and to our surprise and delight we saw a fine young onagra, or wild ass, at his side. Fritz determined at once to lasso the onagra, so he moved on softly, holding out a handful of oats and salt to Grizzle, who instantly ran up to take its favourite food.

The young ass followed, pausing often with a startled look, but Fritz seized his chance, threw the noose cleverly over its head, and the prize was ours. We tied it by two long cords to the roots of two separate trees.

It stamped furiously, trying to get free, but finding this useless, it lay down at last.



## THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

We did not intend Master Grizzle to play truant again, so we tied him fast with a new halter by the side of the onagra, giving both of them plenty of room.



SEIZING OUR GUNS WE PREPARED TO ATTACK ANY ENEMY

As the days passed we tried to train the wild ass to help us in our work. First I tied a bundle of sail-cloth on his back to accustom him to carry things. To prevent him from biting us I made a muzzle, and also fastened his legs loosely together, so that he could not rear or kick.

Gradually he grew used to us, and allowed us to stroke him, but it was a long time before he lost his fierce ways. Indeed I almost despaired of taming him.

## THE WILD ASS

One day, however, I leaped on his back, seized one of his long ears in my teeth and held on firmly. He stood up on his hind legs, but I still kept my hold till he gradually lowered himself and grew quieter.



I SEIZED ONE OF HIS LONG EARS IN MY TEETH AND  
HELD ON FIRMLY

From that time we were his masters, and the boys were able to ride him. We called him Lightfoot, and he truly deserved his name.

The rainy season, or winter, being near at hand, we made a large shelter for our family of animals under the arched roots of the tree; the roof was of bamboo poles closely tied together, the cracks being filled in with moss



## THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

and clay, coated over with tar to make all water-tight.

We put a railing round, and separated the shelter into rooms by nailing planks upon the huge roots. In this way we had a stable, a yard, a storehouse, a hayloft, a larder, and a dining-room, and used the house in the tree-branches for our bedrooms.

We were busy too, bringing in stores of food for ourselves and the animals before the rains began.

### CHAPTER XIX

#### WINTER RAINS

**N**OW it chanced one day in the wood that we came upon a bush with long, sharp-pointed leaves. Ernest picked some of them and gave them to Francis to play with as toy swords.

For a while he was amused with them, but afterwards threw them away. Later on Fritz happened to pick one up, and noticing how easily it would bend, he suggested that we should split some leaves and then plait them into a whip to use when driving the sheep and goats.

As we worked I was delighted to find that in the leaves were many long threads or fibres.

"Why," cried my wife, "it is the flax plant. You must make me a loom, then I can weave these threads into cloth, and we shall soon have new clothes to wear."

The boys set out at once to gather as many

## WINTER RAINS

leaves as they could. These we tied in bundles, carted them to Flamingo Marsh, and spread them out in the water, pressing them down afterwards with stones.

We left the flax there for a fortnight, then spread it out in the sun to dry, and when ready we took it to Falcon's Nest to work with during the rainy season.

Already several sudden showers had warned us that the winter rains were coming, and the nights became more chilly.

Before long the winds ranged through the woods, the sea roared, while from the mountains of clouds, torrents of rain fell without ceasing. The whole country seemed like a huge lake.

It was fortunate that we were high above the waters, but we did not feel very safe there, for the rain came into our tree-home on all sides, and the wind seemed likely to carry us completely away.

We were forced therefore to go down into the lower dwelling and stay among the animals and stores. We dared not keep the door open, because of the rain, so the air became very unhealthy, and we were half stifled with the smoke when we tried to light a fire.

Luckily we had the staircase, and of this we made good use, sitting on the steps there and working during the daytime. Whenever possible we turned the animals out for a while, and Fritz and I always got wet to the skin driving them home again.

Night came on very early, and we used to



## THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

fix a candle in a gourd on the table and spend the time sewing, drawing, writing, or reading the books saved from the wreck, while during the winter, little Francis learned to read and write.

Every few days we made fresh butter in the gourd churn. This with honey and manioc cakes, provided us with food.

It was a difficult matter to feed all the animals, but the buffalo, onagra, and pigs managed to find enough for themselves, when allowed to go out; while to some of the sheep and goats we gave roots and sweet acorns.

We all decided that before another rainy season came we must build a larger and safer winter house (most likely in the rocks near Tent House) and keep Falcon's Nest for our summer home.

### CHAPTER XX

### THE GROTTO

**I** CAN hardly describe how joyous we were when the rain ceased and the air became mild enough for us to venture out once more.

We found our young trees and seeds growing well, countless flowers were to be seen, and beautiful birds were busy rebuilding their nests. As soon as we had mended our home in the tree, my wife began to peel the dried flax-leaves. \* They were then beaten to separate the threads, which, with the help of a spinning-wheel and loom I had made, were woven into cloth.

## THE GROTTO

We found the Tent House badly damaged by the winter rains. The tent was overthrown, most of the provisions spoiled, and, worst of all, two barrels of gunpowder were quite useless. The pinnacle, however, had not suffered much, though the old tub-boat was too shattered to use again.

We looked in vain for any opening in the cliff to serve as a cave, so we set to work to break away part of the rock with chisels, pickaxes, and hammers. It was terrible work, and by evening we had cut away only a few inches.

After several days' work, however, the rock became softer, and one morning, as Jack was hammering on his crow-bar, he shouted, "I have got through."

Imagine our joy when we saw that his crow-bar could be pushed in to its full length. We had indeed discovered a kind of cave or grotto. After breaking away more of the stone, I leaned forward through the opening but found the air very impure. We threw dry, lighted leaves into the cave, but the flames went out immediately. As the air grew more pure we were able to keep dried straw alight. However, we could not venture in without a more convenient light, so Jack galloped off on his buffalo to Falcon's Nest for candles. He returned in a short time, and with him came his mother, who was very excited at the discovery.

I gave every one a lighted candle and led



## THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

the way into the cave. We stopped after a few steps, gazing round in wonder. The walls and roof glittered as if set with sparkling diamonds, huge crystal pendants hung from the roof or rose from the floor forming strange



JACK GALLOPED OFF ON HIS BUFFALO

shapes as of pillars and altars. It was like a fairy palace.

We went on exploring. The floor was smooth and covered with fine white sand. I broke off a piece of one of the crystals and tasted it, then to my great joy I knew that we were in a grotto of rock salt.

If only the roof were safe this would be a splendid place for our new winter house. Fritz and I therefore tried to knock off some of the hanging crystals. We fired our guns, also, and struck with long poles as high as we could reach. All remained firm and we were

## OUR CAVE-DWELLING

satisfied that the grotto would be safe for us to live in, while the salt would be of great value, especially in feeding the animals.

### CHAPTER XXI

## OUR CAVE-DWELLING

ALL our thoughts now were upon our new home, and how to make it ready for next winter. As in summer we should not need them there we took the doors and windows from Falcon's Nest and fitted them into the wall of the cave.

Then we planned out the inside, and after many weeks' work we had two bedrooms, a sitting-room, a kitchen, a workshop, stables, and store-rooms. The doors and woodwork from the wreck proved most useful. I also made a kind of chimney through the rock.

While busy in this part of the island, we made other important discoveries. Large turtles often came ashore to lay eggs in the sand. These were very useful for food, but we wanted to keep some of the turtles alive so that when other food was scarce we could kill and eat them.

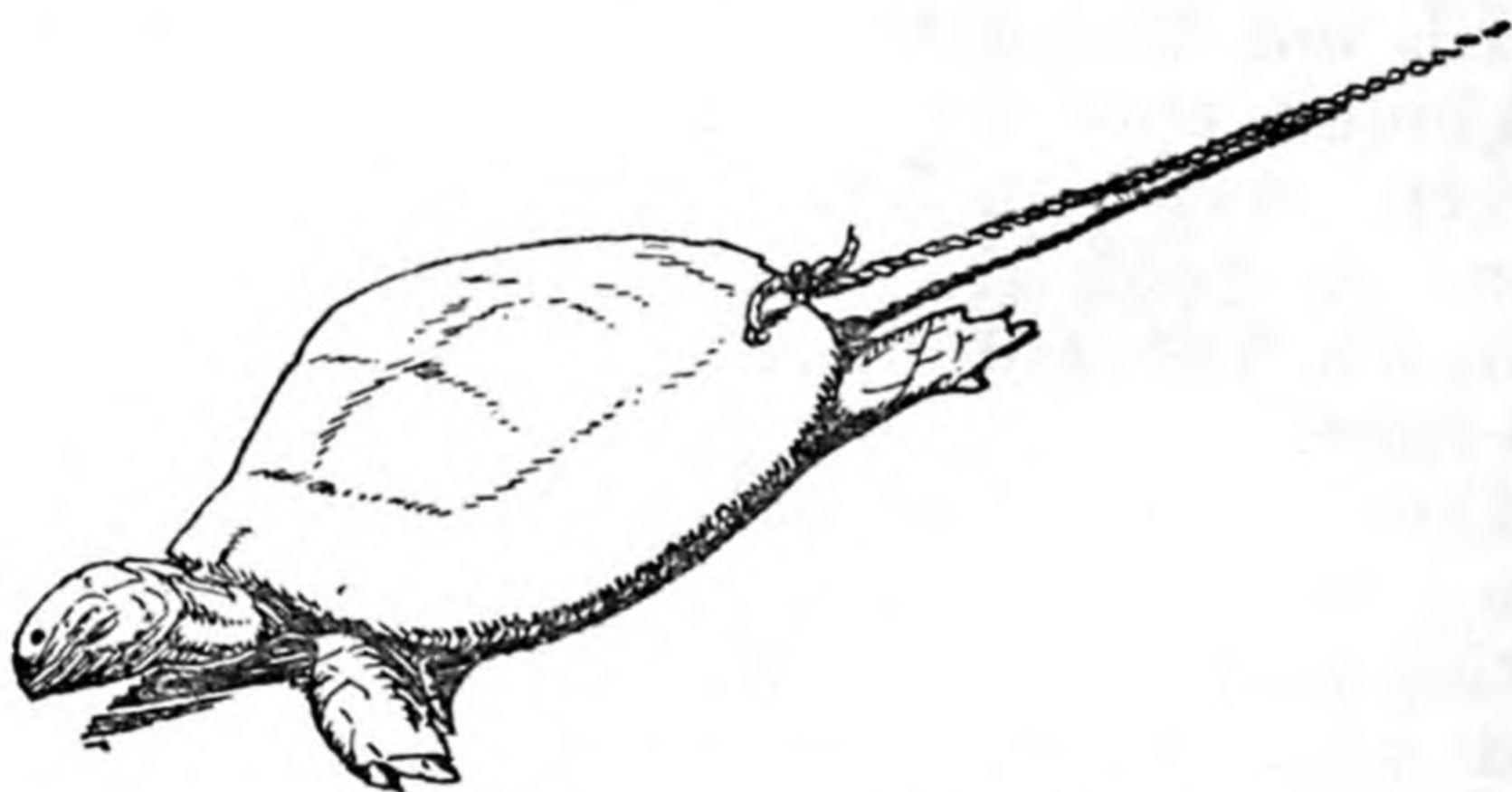
So as soon as we saw one on the sand, we crept cautiously forward and turned it on its back, for then it would be quite helpless. Having made a hole in the shell, we passed a strong cord through it, and fastened the cord firmly to a stave in the ground. Then we



## THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

turned the turtle on its legs again. Of course it always made for the water, where we knew it could get plenty of food and yet be unable to get away altogether. We often caught lobsters, mussels, crabs, and other fish, which helped our food supply.

One morning we noticed immense flocks of



IT ALWAYS MADE FOR THE WATER

birds hovering over part of the sea and discovered they were feeding on herrings which were coming in a great shoal to the bay. So Fritz and Jack stood in the water and were able to get baskets full of the fish in a very short time. They threw them on the sand, and my wife and Ernest cut them open, cleaned them, and rubbed them with salt. In this way we were able to get several barrels of herring stored away for the winter season.

Salmon also came to lay their eggs at the mouth of Jackal River, and many of these were added to our supply of food.

## THE ANIMAL FARM

### CHAPTER XXII

## THE ANIMAL FARM

OUR animals had been growing more numerous, and we were afraid we should be unable to feed them all, especially during the winter, so we decided to make a farm for them, where they could run wild and find food for themselves, yet where we could go at any time if we should need to kill them for ourselves.

So choosing some sheep, goats, pigs, and fowls, we started off across the country. On the way we found a field of cotton-plants. This made my wife very happy and she began planning how to spin and weave the cotton into material for our use, while the soft down would make better beds for us.

At length we reached a convenient place for the animals' farm. Here we worked many days and put up sheds and stables, and also one room for our own. Then we left the cattle there with enough provisions for a few days, after which we hoped they would search for their own in the woods near by.

We still had two months before the rainy season, and used this to make our grotto more complete. We laid the whole floor with clay and spread gravel on it, then beat it till it was smooth and firm. On this we put sail-cloth for a covering.

Our cattle and poultry and all our stores were brought to the grotto, and when the rain set in



## THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

we rejoiced in having a warm well-lighted home—very different from Falcon's Nest. We could work in comfort and safety during the day, and at night, the cave being well lighted with candles, we could read, while my wife often sat working at her loom.

The boys also learned to play upon pipes made from the hollow reed-stems and we sang all the songs we could remember.

We had partitioned off a little Chapel in one corner of the grotto, and here we had a service every Sunday. So the winter passed much more happily than before.

### CHAPTER XXIII

### THE WHALE

**W**HEN the rainy season was over we set out one day for a walk by the cliffs. Fritz had climbed to a high rock, and from there he saw a very large object on the shore of the bay. It looked something like a huge upturned boat, but turned out to be an enormous dead whale sixty or seventy feet long.

We hurried off to bring hatchets and were soon busy cutting up the huge mass so as to get as much oil as possible from the blubber, while my wife and Francis carried the pieces to the tubs. It was not pleasant work, and we were soon almost wading in oil, but we persevered till we had a large supply of blubber. Then we left the rest to the birds of prey, which were flocking on every side.

## THE WHALE

We pressed out the oil from the blubber with large stones, throwing all the refuse into the river to fatten the ducks and geese.



HE SAW A VERY LARGE OBJECT ON THE SHORE OF THE BAY

One morning soon after dawn we set off to see how our cattle were faring at the distant farm. As we came near we were glad to hear the cock crowing, and, pushing our way on through the trees, we found the buildings still in good order. The sheep and goats as well as the poultry had



## THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

already forgotten their tame habits, and fled as we approached. But the boys were able to lasso the goats and milk them, while we caught as many of the poultry as we needed to kill for our dinners.

The next rainy season we made many improvements in our Rock House, and also set about making saddles, bridles, collars, and stirrups for our cattle. We chose pieces of hard, bent roots for the frames and covered these with leather stuffed with long, hairy moss.

From the reeds and rushes that grew by the river we wove baskets for carrying potatoes, roots, nuts, and fruit. Fritz also started weaving a sedan chair, so that his mother could ride in it when we went on long journeys. When finished it was fastened between the cow and ass and was a great success, and many rides did my wife have in her new carriage.

### CHAPTER XXIV

#### A TERRIBLE ENEMY

**W**E had now been ten years on our island and one morning we harnessed two of our animals and hung the sedan chair between them. Ernest got into the carriage, and Jack and Francis mounted on the cattle.

Suddenly Fritz, who had been gazing towards Falcon's Nest, exclaimed, "Whatever is that coming?" He ran for our large telescope, and no sooner did I get a distant view of it than I

## A TERRIBLE ENEMY

called out, "Fly every one to the cave." For to my horror I saw it was a huge serpent or boa-constrictor. We hurried inside the grotto and barricaded the door and windows.

Then mounting to a dove-cot that we had built in the rock above our cave, we saw the



IT WAS A HUGE SERPENT

serpent approach. We all fired at it, but it glided away and disappeared among the reeds in the marsh.

For three whole days we were too terrified to venture out of the grotto. During this time we heard troubled cackling from the ducks and geese and knew that the enemy was still near.

Our food, and especially that of the animals, would not hold out very long, so we gave most food to the cow, since she provided us with milk.

At last we decided to set some of the animals at liberty, and Fritz bravely offered to lead them across by a ford to open country. My wife opened the door rather too soon, and the



## THE CHILDREN'S SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

donkey dashed out and raced along the sands glad to be free.

As it approached the marsh, however, we saw the boa-constrictor glide out towards the donkey with wide-open jaws. The poor animal saw its danger, but was too terrified to move, and in another instant it was being crushed to death by the serpent. The huge monster proceeded to swallow the body of the donkey, and then lay still as if insensible.

This was our chance. Fritz and I seized our guns and when about twenty paces away we both fired. It glared at us with flashing eyes, but it was wounded, so going still closer, we fired again, and soon it lay dead upon the sand.

Afterwards we searched the marsh but were thankful to find no trace of any other serpents. Nor did any of us ever meet with such dangerous enemies again all the time we lived on our wonderful island in the Southern Seas.

